Collaborative Tools for Collaborative Projects

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http://ct-lil2.wikispaces.com/ (presentation materials)

our school's technology situation: We have carts and labs, and are starting to use iPads. We may become a BYO iPad school, but not immediately.

essential to good collaboration (principles for designing lessons + projects):

**positive interdependence**: everyone has to rely on everyone else

**individual accountability**: individuals have to be accountable for their role

**social skill building**: our goal is to learn how to communicate and work with other human beings (face to face as well as online)

**supportive interaction**: we are working to help each other as a group, we understand that it's in our best interest to succeed (you don't want the collaborators to be competing, but groups can compete)

**reflective processing**: we need to stop along the way to take stock, to check in with each other about the group's process (don't wait until the end); and at the end, we need to reflect on the collaboration itself as well as the product

Three main sets of tools that can be helpful:

1. Google Drive (Google Apps, docs, etc.)

2. Edmodo

3. Wikispaces

1. Google Drive: to collaborate on texts, slide shows (up to X number of participants at one time depending on the genre of document created), spreadsheets and other kinds of documents

- make a class slide show where each student contributes one slide (with images, text, notes, etc.)

- collect portfolios by creating a "collection" for each student and sharing it ONLY with that student; then tell students to put every assignment into their folder;

when students turn in assignments, I paste the rubric into the end of the document, add comments, make a copy of the version with a grade, save it elsewhere where they cannot edit it, and then send them an email notification: your paper (in your collection folder) is graded

- Slide Rocket is Google's best presentation tool (for collaborative work)

advantages of Google:

free and easy to use for K-12

real-time synchronous updating

you don't need an email acct (?)

it has privacy options

multiple apps and varying #s of simultaneous editors allowed (on ea type of doc)

graphical options

chat feature

you can upload Microsoft PowerPoint, Excel and Word files

limitations of Google:

- Google sites are not as user friendly as Wikispaces

- email is not required but is helpful

2. Edmodo

I create a group for each class but also join each group as a student, so I can see what the students see.

Students can choose HOW to receive notifications (but if they are getting them on cell phone, be sure they have unlimited testing!).

Under "Accounts and settings," you can choose which kinds of items you want to be notified about.

You can create assignments, polls and discussions, quizzes (and limit when and for how long students have access to them).

When students post a comment, it goes to everyone.

When they respond to an assignment, it only goes to me. You can annotate Word documents and return them to students digitally.

It looks like Facebook to the kids (one reason why they like it).

It has many features of a course management system.

It has privacy settings.

It does not allow any kind of private discussions between students (or you have to create a separate Edmodo group for each group of students).

3. Wikispaces

(wiki is Hawaiian for "quick")

Wikis are simple to create and use because the format is standardized.

It emphasizes info and content rather than the design of the site (and ambitious designs tend not to work well).

It is not simultaneous (doesn't facilitate student interaction in the document itself), except through the threaded discussion function.

You can lock the first page so they cannot edit the first page, but give them roles to create and edit content on other pages.

It has flexibility about what you can add when editing the page (docs, links, etc.).

It has limited design functions, which can be helpful or not.